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October 2016 Japan's №1 English Magazine
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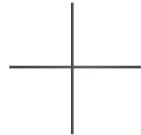
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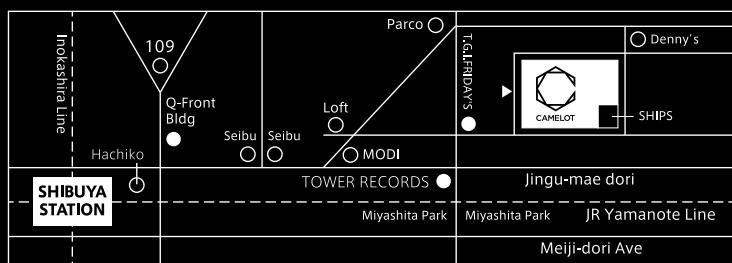
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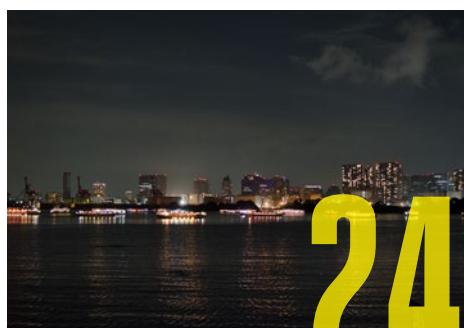
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IN FOCUS

A silhouette strikes a pose underground near Tokyo Station, by Andrew Siriapismai



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TO-DO LIST

Check full event listings on our Events page online!
metropolisjapan.com/events



OCT 1-10

DANCE NEW AIR

Japanese and international contemporary dancers will be showcased at Dance New Air, the biennial festival that launched in 2002. Six dance performances will be on display this year, thematically exploring the link between music and words. In addition to the performances, the festival program comprises an assortment of events relating to contemporary dance, including exhibitions, film screenings, and a book fair. The festival will be held across six venues, including Spiral Hall Garden, Tokyo Women's Plaza, and Theatre Image Forum. The cost for tickets varies depending on the event, so be sure to check on the festival website. **Oct 1-10. From ¥1,700-18,000. Spiral Hall, 5-6-23 Minami-Aoyama, Minato-ku. ☎ Omotesando. dancenewair.tokyo.**

OCT 6

PERFECT LIARS CLUB

Put on your sceptic's hat and prepare to laugh, because Perfect Liars Club is launching in Tokyo this month. The smash hit comedy show from Washington D.C. has been a staple in the indie spoken word scene in the American capital since launching in 2013, and now you can take part too, here in Tokyo. How it works: Four storytellers tell the audience a story. Three of the stories are true, and one is fabricated. The audience then interrogates the storytellers, asking questions to determine the liar out of the bunch. Will you be able to spot the one telling fibs? **Oct 6, 7pm. ¥1,500 includes a drink. Good Heavens Bar, 5-32-5 Shimokitazawa, Setagaya-ku. ☎ Shimokitazawa. www.perfectliarsclub.com/tokyo-shows.**

OCT 7-9

EDITOR'S PICK MONTREUX JAZZ FESTIVAL JAPAN

Montreux Jazz Festival is back in Japan this year after successfully launching last year. The festival is an offshoot of the Swiss festival of the same name, which was first held on the shores of Lake Geneva in 1967, and which has since grown into one of the world's largest music festivals. "Jazz" here is a loose term, as the festival features artists across different genres and styles. Some highlights include techno legend Derrick May and British tastemaker Gilles Peterson. Influential Japanese fashion designer Yohji Yamamoto is also involved as the key visual producer for the Festival. **Oct 7-9. From ¥3,500-14,000. 0-00-00 Yebisu Garden Place, 4-20 Ebisu, Shibuya-ku. ☎ Ebisu. mjf.peatix.com.**



UNTIL OCT 23

WORLD PRESS PHOTO CONTEST

Formed in 1955 by a group of Dutch photographers, the annual contest has grown into one of the most prestigious awards in photojournalism and multimedia storytelling. This year the winning collection was selected from 82,951 photos, submitted by 5,755 photographers from 128 different countries. All the winning images will be on display, picked for a range of categories spanning from general news and contemporary issues to human interest photography. As always, this year's World Press Photo collection combines aesthetic and technical aspects of photography with journalistic urgency to tell visually compelling stories about the world today. **Until Oct 23 (closed Mondays). From ¥400-800. Tokyo Photographic Art Museum at Yebisu Garden Place, 1-13-3 Mita, Meguro-ku. ☎ Ebisu. bit.ly/2cK3GWI.**

OCT 26-30

OPEN AIR CINEMA

The Arena at the Roppongi Hills Plaza will transform into an open air cinema for the Tokyo International Film Festival. Look for the TIFF cinema area in Roppongi Hills, and catch a film or two in an outdoor setting. The Arena has a huge retractable roof, meaning the weather can't threaten screenings. To kick things off, there will be a screening of *Won't You Come Talk About Cinema*, a production by Tower Light Cinema that looks to engage the audience in a discussion on cinema. There will also be a screening of *Be Kind Rewind* on the first night. The TIFF open air cinema films are playing for free, so make sure you check the TIFF website for screening schedules. **Oct 26-30. Roppongi Hills Arena, 6-9-1 Roppongi, Minato-ku. ☎ Roppongi. 2016.tiff-jp.net/en.**

OCT 27-NOV 6

TOKYO RAMEN SHOW

Get your taste buds ready for one of Tokyo's largest events dedicated entirely to ramen. The Tokyo Ramen Show will feature over 36 different vendors, all serving up different regional varieties of the Japanese comfort food. There will be plenty of the usual suspects—*shoyu*, *tonkotsu*, *shio*—as well as ramen made with region-specific ingredients and bowls of original broths made specifically for the event. At ¥850 a pop, you can slurp through all regional varieties and more. **Oct 27-Nov 6. Komazawa Olympic Park, Komazawa Koen, 1-1 Setagaya-ku. ☎ Komazawa Daigaku. www.ramenshow.com.**



Photo by Andrew Woolner



© Marc Van Cauwenbergh



Photo by Sami Levine

OCT 13-16

THE TRAGEDY OF MACBETH

Something wicked this way comes, and it comes to you from English language theatre group Tokyo International Players. In English—nay, original Shakespearean English—they will perform the play *Macbeth*. It's the infamous story of Thane Macbeth's turbulent ride through temptation, ambition, betrayal, murder, and power. See how the actors interpret the roles of Macbeth, his sexy wife, and the three cackling witches. Tokyo International Players is the oldest running English-language theatre company in Tokyo. It was founded in 1896, just 273 years after Shakespeare wrote *Macbeth*. The Tragedy of Macbeth will run on all four evenings, plus lunchtime shows on the weekend.

Oct 13-16. From ¥2,500-4,500. Theater Sun-mall, Shinjuku. bit.ly/2cIPYie.

OCT 21-23

ROPPONGI ART NIGHT

Roppongi will transform into an “art playground” for three days this month with the return of Roppongi Art Night. In its 8th year, the event is gaining attention and cementing its place as one of Tokyo’s premier contemporary art festivals. This year’s theme is all about playfulness, with various exhibitions, interactive installations, and performances aimed at engaging audiences to interact and participate with art. Events will be held at The National Art Center, different galleries situated at Tokyo Midtown and Roppongi Hills, and on the streets of Roppongi. **Oct 21-23. Various locations, Roppongi.** www.roppongiartnight.com.

OCT 22

JOURNEY TO THE END OF THE NIGHT

Have you ever seen a chase scene in a movie and thought to yourself, “I could easily get away?” Here’s your chance to put theory to test. Journey to the End of the Night was created in 2006 as an interactive street game. The objective: Make it to six checkpoints throughout the city without getting caught. It’s essentially a huge game of tag, where you are only allowed to travel by foot or public transport. The course is approximately 8.5 km and takes about two to four hours to complete. Do you think you have what it takes to get away? **Oct 22.**

Registration at 6:30pm. Mabashi Park, 4-35 Koenji-kita, Suginami-ku. ichaseyou.com.



OCT 29

METROPOLIS & BLACKLIST PRESENT "BEHIND THE MASK" HALLOWEEN PARTY

The annual Metropolis Halloween Party returns this year in collaboration with Black List, Tokyo’s premier event production company. Every year, our Halloween party attracts A-listers, business professionals, and club rats alike. Behind the mask, you could be anyone. This year we invite you to the stylish 5-star Andaz Tokyo Toranomon Hills hotel. We promise you spectacular views over Tokyo, if you can look away from the crowd of beautiful people in costume around you. We look forward to seeing you there! **Oct 29. ¥3,000. Andaz Tokyo, 52F 1-23-4, Toranomon, Minato-ku.** metropolisjapan.com/behindthemask.

OCT 29-30

TOKYO VEGEFOOD FESTA

Japan is a notoriously difficult country for vegetarians to navigate, and it goes without saying that vegans have an even tougher time satisfying their herbivorous appetites. But that wasn’t always the case. Traditional Japanese cuisine was largely vegetarian, so much so that in 1973 the Honorary Vice-President for the International Vegetarian Union proclaimed, “Japan was vegetarian for 1000 years.” Tokyo Vegefood Festa celebrates this tradition as well as all things vegan, with over 100 stalls offering everything from organic produce to raw food. Expect to see stalls from popular macrobiotic cafes and plenty of fair trade, environmentally friendly products. **Oct 29-30. Yoyogi Park, Jinnan, Shibuya-ku.** Harajuku.tokyo-vegefesta.com.

OCT 30

HELLO HALLOWEEN PUMPKIN PARADE

This year marks the 34th annual Hello Halloween Pumpkin Parade. The annual parade is a family affair, and each year over 1000 kids aged 12 and under dress up in their favorite costumes and join in on the festivities. Traffic will be blocked off on Omotesando, so kids and families can safely parade down the tree-lined avenue. Kids can also go trick-or-treating at participating stores, so pick out a costume and bring a bag for all the candy! **Oct 30. Omotesando, Jingumae, Shibuya-ku.** [omotesando.or.jp/halloween](http://Omotesando.omotesando.or.jp/halloween).

TOKYO MIDNIGHT MUNCHIES

Where to go for your sordid post-midnight culinary affairs

BY JESSICA THOMPSON

Whether you're on your way home—from the bar, club, concert, work, dinner, love hotel; have jet lag; have just arrived; or for any other reason are hungrily wandering Tokyo's streets during the witching hours, you won't be left to starve. New York may be the city that never sleeps, but Tokyo is the city that always eats.

1. FAMIRESU FOR ASSORTED FUSION MEALS AND TEISHOKU

Fami-resu (family restaurants) are American-style chain diners offering creatively localized menus, low-key dining, and very reasonable prices. Alongside regular American diner fare—hotcakes, eggs, bacon, toast—you can find modern and traditional Japanese dishes such as *teishoku* (set meals) of grilled fish with miso, rice and pickles; Japanese-style hamburg; curry rice; or noodles. You can also find decidedly Japanese takes on Western cuisines, from pastas and pizzas to salads. Both Denny's and Jonathan's have 24-hour locations around Tokyo.

2. DONBURI CHAINS FOR BEEF BOWLS AND MORNING SETS

If the late night munchies have you craving a bowl of steaming rice topped with juicy meat, Tokyo's ubiquitous and 24-hour *gyudon* (beef-on-rice bowls) chains like Sukiya, Matsuya, and Yoshinoya have your back. All serve a range of beef and pork bowls in varying sizes and flavors, with miso soup, tea, and optional side dishes of salads, vegetables, and tofu. Between 4am and 11am, breakfast sets also become available, featuring options like rice topped with raw fish and tofu, natto, sausage and fried egg, or grilled fish and *tamagoyaki* (rolled omelet).



3. IZAKAYA FOR SIT-DOWN MIDNIGHT (AND BEYOND) BANQUETS

Izakaya are often described as Japanese gastropubs, as you can generally count on extensive food and drink menus, revelry, and dimly-lit settings. They are the perfect spot for indulging in more elaborate late-night/early morning cravings. Dine on plates of sashimi, oysters, pickles, yakitori, buttered corn, *hiyayakko* tofu, *nabe* (hot pots), potato salad, *kamameshi* (rice dishes cooked in an iron pot), and more while you sip sake, wine, whiskey, beer, or cocktails. Chain izakayas like Doma Doma, Wara Wara, Watami, and Torikizoku (yakitori only) all have branches open until 5am.

4. SUSHI RESTAURANTS FOR YOUR SEAFOOD CRAVINGS

Raw fish might not be on everyone's agenda in the middle of the night, but if it is then you are catered for. If you're up at 5am, then most sushi shops around Tsukiji market are open. If it's before then, Sushi Zanmai is a decent sushi bar chain with branches all over Tokyo, many of them open 24 hours. For a range of seafood beyond (but also including) sushi and sashimi, head to one of Isomaru Suisan's 50 venues in Tokyo. Tables are equipped with a grill, so you get to cook up your own prawn skewers, scallops, crab, and whatever else takes your fancy from their extensive seafood list.





5. NOODLE JOINTS FOR RAMEN, SOBA, UDON

There's a culture in Japan of finishing a night on carbs, making noodles the perfect late-night dining option—as well as being nourishing, easy-to-find, and light on the pocket. For ramen, there's Ippudo and Ichiran serving Hakata ramen, with its rich, milky, pork-bone-broth; Kamukura serves ramen in a sweet and light soy-based broth with a range of toppings; Afuri has ramen made using spring water and seasonal vegetables, and even has a vegan broth option. For soba, try Fuji Soba or Yoshi Soba, which offer everything from kake soba (straight up broth) to soba topped with wakame, egg, fried tofu, and tempura. If it's udon you want at all hours, you can eat it in style at Tsurutontan (Roppongi, Ginza, Shinjuku), with options like mentaiko cream udon and a glass of bubbles. Or opt for soft and chewy sanuki udon from popular udon chain Hanamaru. All venues have several locations across Tokyo open either until 5am or 24 hours.

6. ONSEN FOR SPA-SIDE DINING

If you're up for a full sensory experience, several Tokyo spas are open (almost) 24 hours, and have restaurants within the complexes. LaQua in Tokyo Dome City and Oedo Onsen (also known as "the Disneyland of onsen") are open 11am-9am.



7. ALLEYWAY EATS FOR SEEDY/LOW-KEY AND MORE DRINKING

Tokyo is somewhere that you **do** want to walk down dark alleys late at night, particularly the rabbit warren-like wonderlands of Shibuya's Nonbei Yokochō (Drunkards' Alley), Sangenjaya's Sankaku Chitai, Shinjuku's Golden Gai, and Ebisu's Yokochō. Later at night the food options may get limited, but you're bound to be able to find some yakitori, oden, or other house-made specialties until around 5am. You're also bound to chat with colorful locals, and drink more.

8. CONBINI FOR A LITTLE OF EVERYTHING

Steaming meat-filled buns, cleansing oden, greasy crumbed miscellaneous meat, curious and delicious pasta fusions, all manner of bakery items, whatever beverage you could possibly want—convenience stores are your answer for a quick and cheap bite.



RECIPE

JAPANESE BLOODY MARY

BY JESSICA THOMPSON

INGREDIENTS

- 200ml tomato juice
- 100ml shochu
- 1tsp *yuzukoshō*, or to taste
- 1-2 tbsp fresh yuzu or lemon juice
- 3 dashes Tabasco sauce
- 1teaspoon mirin
- 1pinch salt

**SERVING
1**

TO SERVE

- ¼ teaspoon soy sauce, or to taste
- *Shichimi togarashi* spice mixture, to taste
- 1stalk celery, or Japanese white celery stalks
- 1stick cucumber
- Yuzu or lemon wedge
- Pickled ginger
- Pickled daikon
- Green olive
- Skewer

PREPARATION

1. Add plenty of ice to a shaker or stirring glass, along with tomato juice, shochu, *yuzukoshō*, lemon juice, mirin, hot sauce, salt, and pepper.
2. Shake or stir vigorously to chill and combine.
3. Pour the mixture into a tall glass.
4. Add a celery stalk and cucumber stick to the glass, and sprinkle over a few drops of soy sauce and *shichimi togarashi* to taste.
5. Garnish glass with lemon wedge and a skewer of pickled ginger, pickled daikon, and green olives.



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NEVER MIND THE BOLLOCKS, HERE'S TATEMICHIIYA

A punk-rock izakaya hidden in upscale Daikanyama

BY JOSHUA McDOWELL

Tokyo certainly has no shortage of izakayas. The Japanese bar/restaurant establishments cluster around virtually every station, from chains with menu-wielding staff outside ferrying customers to their door, to old-fashioned mom-and-pop joints that seat maybe five.

However, Tatemichiya has found a way to differentiate itself from the infinite other izakayas in the city.

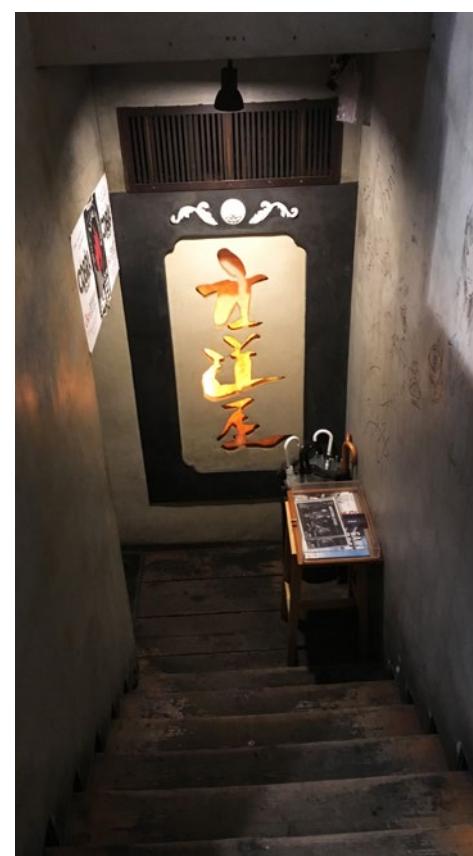
Tatemichiya hides in plain sight. Masquerading as an *izakaya*, the shrine to golden-age punk is demarcated streetside by a nondescript sign and menu board, on an otherwise forgettable intersection of two wide, busy roads. The only real landmark close being the conversely conspicuous, and brilliantly named, Evisu the Tokyo, the flagship store of the eponymous Japanese denim brand. The restaurant is so well-hidden that even with Google Maps open, I managed to walk past the stairs leading down to the front door. Pro tip: If you're coming from Daikanyama Station and see Evisu, you've gone too far.

The walls within are covered in posters for the likes of The Ramones and Sex Pistols, and Japanese punk jams through the speakers. The aesthetic doesn't feel like an affectation put on as a novelty to draw in customers. Rather, it's clearly a labor of love for the owner, who

captures his crew from behind the bar, while pouring drinks and grilling *yakitori* skewers. His grey hair pushed into a thinning mohawk, he serves and jokes with customers candidly, embodying the cozy but cool vibe of the establishment.

The main seating area is divided into a sunken dining room with loft-style seating above, making the small but high-ceilinged space seem greater. The loft area accommodates groups nicely, but reservations may be necessary.

If Tatemichiya were a live music show, the bar would be its closing act. The centerpiece of



the restaurant, it is framed by a playful contrast of Japanese art and Western punk motifs: the lights above are made from drum cymbals, and the whole place is backed by a wall of sake bottles. Ten minutes after I'd entered, I spotted authentic graffiti from superstar artist Yoshitomo Nara. A couple of original pieces from him are on display, apparently scribbled on the walls on a drunken night.

The food is very good overall, but it's almost an afterthought to the setting and atmosphere. However, as is typically the case at smaller izakayas, the food is better than at the big chains.

On a recommendation, I ordered the avocado-steak, not knowing what to expect from the name alone. Turns out it's sliced avocado, grilled and seasoned like steak ... although I'm guessing at that last part. Regardless, it was the best thing I had that night, and I'd order it again.

Among the other dishes were grilled eggplant, fried chicken cartilage, sun-dried mackerel, and stir-fried beef intestines in teriyaki sauce—which, if you're not put off by eating guts, is great.

As a side note: rumor has it that the place is popular with visiting foreign rock stars.

Tatemichiya's aesthetic and vibe are its main charms. If you're going there for the food, you may not be their target audience.

Tatemichiya. Open 6pm-3am weekdays; 6pm-12am weekends & hols. 30-8 Sarugakucho, Shibuya-ku. Daikanyama.



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CINEMATIC UNDERGROUND
LIFE LESSONS

Hard-hitting dramas from Europe

BY KEVIN MCGUE

Fall brings a selection of European dramas dealing with philosophical issues such as morality and mortality. Up first is the recent Italian film *Human Capital*. Set around an elite private school, it starts with a hit-and-run accident, then tracks the effect it has on a rich family and the working-class victim. On from October 8 at Bunkamura's Le Cinema (2-24-1 Dogenzaka, Shibuya-ku; www.bunkamura.co.jp).

Masterpieces from the golden age of Italian

cinema can be enjoyed with a Neorealism program starting October 15 at Shibuya art house Cinema Vera. The movement emerged after WWII and dealt unflinchingly with how moral issues were complicated by postwar poverty and injustice. The lineup includes Roberto Rossellini's *Rome: Open City* and *Stromboli* (pictured), starring his muse Ingrid Bergman. Cinema Vera (1-5 Maruyamacho, Shibuya-ku; www.cinemavera.com).

Prolific Japanese director Kiyoshi Kurosawa

Stromboli: © RKO Radio Pictures

makes his French-language debut with *The Woman in the Silver Plate*. The fantasy drama, shot in Paris, centers on a photographer who uses an old process said to preserve the soul of the subject, and tries to use it to give eternal life to one of his models. Human Trust Cinema Yurakucho (2-7-1 Yurakucho, Chiyoda-ku; www.ht-cinema.com).

Another French film dealing with issues of mortality is *The Final Lesson*. It starts with a woman celebrating her 92nd birthday with her children and grandchildren, and calmly informing them that she plans to control how her own life ends. The film goes on to explore how they all deal with the news. Starts late October at Cine Switch in Ginza (4-4-5 Ginza, Chuo-ku; www.cineswitch.com).



SOMEONE'S XYLOPHONE

BY ROB SCHWARTZ

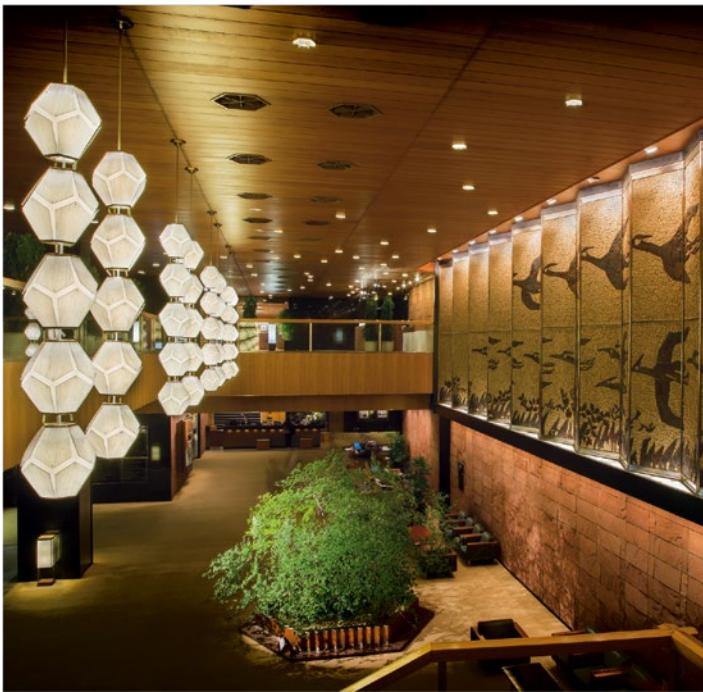
84 year-old director and scriptwriter Yōichi Higashi has had a storied career, through which he has addressed oppressed peoples of Japan (like the *burakamin*, the former lowest caste) or issues of abuse in the country. Sadly the talented and accomplished auteur is little known out of his homeland despite his 2004 effort *The Crying Wind* (*Fuon*) being shown at the World Film Festival in Montreal. The current piece is set in modern-day Tokyo and involves Sayoko (Takako Tokiwa), an ordinary middle-aged housewife with a sweet husband (Masanobu Katsumura) and a loving daughter (Mikoto Kimura). One day Sayoko goes to a local beauty parlor to have her hair done and she's enthralled at the sensitive handling of Kaito (Sosuke Ikematsu). Sayoko



©2016年『だれかの木琴』製作委員会

quickly becomes obsessed and starts repeatedly emailing the handsome male stylist. Kaito turns to his boss and girlfriend (Aimi Satsukawa) but they are unable to offer help. When Sayoko decides to go to Kaito's home things could hit a crisis point.

The work, based on the novel of the same name by Areo Inoue, constantly defies expectations and offers an insightful portrayal of the empty spaces in contemporary life. (Japanese title: *Dareka no Mokkin*; 112 min.)



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FEATURED MOVIE

SUICIDE SQUAD

A black-ops government agent agrees to spring a jailed cadre of mutant cutthroats and thieves because they're apparently the only ones who can save the world from invading villains with godlike powers. Or something.

The film may have flipped a more effective bird at bloated superhero movies had it not so closely resembled its target genre. Starting with the moldy plot that dates back at least to *The Dirty Dozen* in 1967.

A good Will Smith heads up the adequate

cast, but the movie is owned by Margot Robbie as the unpredictable, decidedly unhinged Harley Quinn. The woman was born for this kind of schmaltz, and I mean that in a good way.

We are first treated to at least eight maudlin backstories, none of which makes us care about the characters. Turns out these are the movie's best parts. Lots of shooting, fisticuffs, explosions and empty attitude, leading up to a moronic climax.

Look at it as a quirkier, more nihilistic Avengers with a pseudo-noir, Deadpool angle; or

a caffeinated, child-free X-Men; or maybe a garish and puerile Guardians of the Galaxy. It makes Batman vs. Superman seem coherent. The movie serves up its muddy storytelling with an irritating, misplaced sense of self-congratulation, but it's nowhere near as subversive as the filmmakers think it is.

I've sat through far worse superhero ensemble flicks, which is not a hard thing to do. At least this one tries something different. But don't take that as a recommendation. (123 min)

**THE BFG**

A ten-year-old girl is snatched from an orphanage by a giant. Luckily for her, he's an outcast among the

(much larger) giants because he refuses to eat children. Steven Spielberg's live action-CG blend, from a story by Roald Dahl, is clever and quietly inventive, a sweet-natured, effervescent story (with fart jokes) that will thrill kids and amuse adults. The giant is memorably played by Mark Rylance (*Bridge of Spies*), and Sophie by a spot-on Ruby Barnhill. A delight, but it lacks that little something that Spielberg often imparts to his fantasy films. This is not *E.T.* I was entertained but not transported. (117 min)

**NOW YOU SEE ME 2**

The Horsemen resurface, this time forced by a tech genius to perform their most daring heist yet. Director Jon M. Chu

has a lighter touch than Louis Leterrier brought to the 2013 original, but also louder and longer. This logic-free, talky, CG joyride has too many things wrong with it to go into here. But if you liked the first movie and can check your brain at the door, this is an opportunity to spend a few more hours with this amiable, charismatic ensemble of near-superhero illusionists/con artists. I'll wager, however, that within a week any memory of it will have gone "poof." Like magic. Japanese title: *Grand Illusion 2: Miyaburareta Trick*. (129 min)

**SELF/LESS**

A dying tycoon entrusts his consciousness to a high-tech company for transplantation into a specially grown younger

body and wakes up as Ryan Reynolds. Cool, but then memory fragments lead to the realization that said company may have fudged the "specially grown" part. This surprise-free, body-switch thriller toys ineptly with some philosophical quandaries before morphing into a not-particularly-enjoyable car chase/shoot-em-up. Largely wasted cast includes Ben Kingsley, Natalie Martinez and Matthew Goode. Go rent John Frankenheimer's 1966 *Seconds*, of which this is a lame remake. Japanese title: *Kakusei Shita Kioku*. (117 min)

**GODS OF EGYPT**

Jeez, where to start? The cornball dialogue, the phony ancient mythos (the Egyptian pantheon as a band of

superheroes), the temples that crumble on cue, the Windows 95-level screensaver CGI, a monster or two, the participation of Gerard Butler, and the many large breasts prominently displayed could make for a pretty good bad movie, you're saying. But this ugly, interminable excrescence is too banal and incoherent even for that. Bright thought: someone lost more than \$100 million on this bloated, witless, sword-and-sandal turkey. Dark thought: It brazenly sets up a sequel. Just shoot me. (126 min)

**JANIS: LITTLE GIRL BLUE**

Janis Joplin's raspy wail and the tunes she wrote somehow reached into reservoirs of sadness we never knew we had.

Comparisons have been made to Amy Winehouse, some accurate, some not. They each had their own demons. But the shared theme of almost all their songs was a desperate loneliness. This sympathetic, conventionally structured cultural excavation offers a new element: the reading (in a spot-on voiceover by Cat Power, capturing the singer's spirit) of several heartbreakingly optimistic letters that Janis wrote to her family back in Texas. An engrossing tribute to a brilliant talent. (103 min)

**BY THE SEA**

A blocked novelist and his mopey wife (Brad Pitt & Angelina Jolie Pitt) while away the hours in a French seaside hotel

peeking through a hole in the wall at a randy newlywed couple. If director Jolie Pitt's aim was to recreate the melancholy of mid 60s European romanticism, this is a success. But it amounts to two hours of Jolie and Pitt undergoing couples therapy. Brief flashes of emotional truth in this aggressively humorless vanity production are smothered in overlong "mood" sequences and leaden dialogue. There's no narrative arc or emotional payoff for your patience. Bored my friggin' socks off. Japanese title: *Shiroi Boushi no Onna*. (122 min)

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BEYOND ORICON

Up-and-coming artists

BY PATRICK ST. MICHEL

If looking at music news in Japan this fall makes you feel like you've fallen in a wormhole to the 1990s, you aren't far off. The most buzzed-about album of autumn 2016 comes courtesy of J-Pop superstar Hikaru Utada, while the slow dissolution of idol group SMAP has held a chokehold on gossip sites. This cursory glance makes it seem like nothing much has changed since before the millennium.

Of course though, plenty of exciting new music does exist—you just have to dig beyond the morning TV shows and Oricon charts to find it. From whirlwind rappers to unnerving electronic outfits, here are five up-and-coming Japanese artists to check out this season. Especially if you want something a little different.

CHELMICO

Trends come and go in Japanese music, so who knows how long the current wave of female-fronted hip-hop units emerging from the J-Pop woodworks will last. But at the very least, it has allowed Chelmico to step into the spotlight. The Rip-Slyme-inspired duo consisting of MC Rachel and MC Mamiko deliver tag-team rhymes over music running from frantic club bangers ("Junejuly") to laid back grooves ("Labyrinth '97," complete with saxophone), all centered around choruses that would make a J-Pop composer blush. The pair's debut album arrives on October 18, and highlights an energy that hints at something with the potential to stick around.

IN THE BLUE SHIRT

In The Blue Shirt is an electronic producer who hails from Osaka, and he's the latest of the talented trackmakers to emerge from the city in recent years. The young creator breaks down music to microscopic levels—he takes tunes by artists such as Lorde or Enrique Iglesias, slices up vocals from said songs into half-second snippets, and then lets them pinball off one another to form a sound all his own. That plays out all over his own zippy rush of synthesizer, sometimes featuring acoustic guitar strums and woodwind flourishes when he wants to get a bit more introspective.

DOTAMA

The Tochigi-born rapper has been kicking around Japan's hip-hop scene since 2007, but it has only been in the last year he has attracted widespread attention from those outside. Primarily, that's thanks to a brief appearance in the visual-overload of last year's *Tokyo Tribe* and, even more so, to appearances on late night TV shows where he showed off his freestyle abilities. Yet his charm extends beyond the screen. Dotama raps in rapid-fire style, fitting in clever jokes and lines at a breakneck speed. And he's able to do it over all sorts of beats, from traditional boom-bap to wonkier backdrops created by some of Japan's more left-field producers.



YAHYEL

If possible, seeing yahyel in person—preferably in a dark club, and even better if you happen to be in a particularly brooding mood—offers the best view of what the Tokyo group does. That's because visuals add to the unnerving energy of their music, composed of hazy electronics worthy of Warp and digitally manipulated vocals that give songs such as "Once" an otherworldly bend (backed by beats that give their songs a pop edge, so it isn't pure exercise in making hairs raise on your arm). In the right live setting, the accompanying VJ makes the whole experience even more stimulating, but listening to yahyel through headphones will still bring out all the uneasy touches.

SHIGGY JR.

Pop doesn't have to be complicated, and most of the time it should veer towards the simple. Shiggy Jr. understand this, and the four-piece avoids gimmicks and novelty in favor of bouncy numbers anchored by radio-ready hooks. They take cues from a wide variety of sources in crafting their skippy tunes, featuring slinky funk bass and splashes of disco synthesizer that add a shimmer to their songs. All those elements appear on their first album *All About Pop*, out at the end of October, as does their uncanny ability to create a chorus bound to be stuck in your head all day long.

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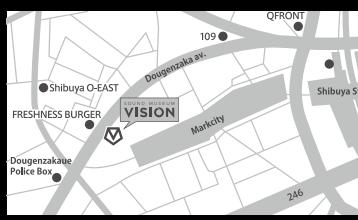
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THE TOKYO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Major Asian film festival is back for its 29th year

BY EDITORIAL

The Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFF) is back again for its 29th run. With the world premiere of the *Asian Three-Fold Mirror*, spotlights on animation director **Mamoru Hosoda** and director **Shunji Iwai**, this year's TIFF continues to deliver its blend of thoughtfully curated films both international and Japanese.

As the only Japanese film festival recognized by the International Federation of Film Producers Associations, the Tokyo International Film Festival has become one of the major film festivals in Asia and is dedicated to supporting Asian talents and extending Japan's international cultural reach.

This year's animation section spotlights director Mamoru Hosoda, whose film credits include *The Girl Who Leapt Through Time*, *Summer Wars*, and *Wolf Children*. Most recently, *The Boy and the Beast* was the number one domestic film in Japan and will be distributed in France. The story follows a boy, Kyuta, who slips into an alternate universe and finds a surrogate father in a bear-man, Kumatetsu.

The Japan Now section's Director in Focus will be Shunji Iwai, who rose to fame with *Love Letter*, and whose later films—*Swallowtail Butterfly*, *All About Lily Chou-Chou*, *Hana and Alice*—have garnered attention and praise from eminent sources, including Quentin Tarantino. His most recent film, *A Bride for Rip Van Winkle*, follows timid Nanami as she hires actors to play her friends and family at her upcoming wedding.

Other events include the three competitive sections, in which submitted films compete for the Tokyo Grand Prix among other prizes. Special Screenings will screen high-profile films that have not yet been released in Japan, with celebrations including a Red Carpet welcome. These include the opening film *Florence Foster Jenkins* (with Meryl Streep and Hugh Grant) and the closing film *Satoshi: A Move for Tomorrow*.



Partnering with the **Japan Foundation Asia Center**, this year TIFF will premier the *Asian Three-Fold Mirror* project, bringing together three directors from Japan and other Asian countries to create a thematically-linked series of omnibus films. This year, the first in the series brings stories from characters who journey between Japan and Cambodia, the Philippines, and Malaysia. This year also debuts the Youth Close-up section, which features stories about childhood and adolescence. TIFF hopes that teens will be exposed to as many films as possible, though the stories can be enjoyed by all ages.

TIFF also boasts the addition of EX Theater

Roppongi as a new venue this year, to host the Opening and Closing ceremonies as well as the main Competition films. Other venues and theatres around Tokyo will also be showing films from TIFF from October 25 - November 3. There will even be open-air screenings at the Roppongi Hills Arena for four days at the end of October.

Tokyo International Film Festival 2016 runs from October 25 - November 3 at various locations. Check tiff-jp.net for details.



NIGHT RIDERS

The only time to hit the streets

BY THERESE DETJE

The best time to ride is after the train stops," says street rider Nobuhiro "Pegy" Masuda. "And it stops around midnight."

It's then when the city is in bed or boozily glued to a barstool that the skateboarders and BMX riders hit the streets. On a typical night, Peggy meets his crew before midnight and they cruise around, looking for spots in Tokyo to ride in.

Why at night? Simply because it's too crowded during the day. The type of obstacles BMX riders need are always in use; the handrails by steps are groped all day long, and tired bodies heave themselves on and off bank ledges. It's Tokyo: any public space is going to be occupied by one of the 13 million people living here—unless it's the dead of night.

Street-style riding is different from the park-style, where tricks are limited to the features of the skatepark and the imagination of its designers. The street riders say that any spot can be ridden; you just need the eye for it. But of course, there are some things you can't ride.

Street riders and skaters see the city through different eyes from us pedestrians. They prowl our city in the day, checking out rails, banks, walls, and gaps. Tokyo is full of unpleasant design in the form of stoppers on ledges and guards on rails. Compared to other cities, the obstacles here are smaller, trickier, and usually without much space to land. "Tokyo is huge but narrow and strange. There's no similar city in the world," Peggy says.



All photos by Kenta Kunie

That's why Tokyo riders have developed a rather unique style.

Street skaters and BMX riders are not the vandals they are often accused of being. They are (mostly) honest and decent, and usually very self-aware, traits that come from their determination and psychological strength to ignore pain when trying, and trying again, to execute a difficult trick.

You might only recognize one by the callouses on his hands or the grazes on his shins. Otherwise, during the day, they are the artists, businessmen, architects, and teachers that walk among us in Tokyo crowds. Peggy himself is a salaryman, working from 9am to 7pm, but still finds time to ride two to three nights per week. He admits it gets tiring, especially since they usually finish riding around 6am.

Filming and taking photos is a big part of the sport as well. It's made even more challenging in Tokyo, where riding at night means you have to bring additional lights to capture good footage. But it's meant to be hard, and it demands creativity.

Foreigners from other skating and BMX communities may find it novel that street skating and riding happen mostly at night. While skating and BMX communities exist worldwide, the scene is relatively small and

tight-knit. This means a non-Japanese skater or rider could easily join a crew in Tokyo to hit the streets with: it's all about camaraderie and fist bumps.

Still, there is the likelihood policemen will wag their fingers at the skaters and riders for potentially damaging property and making noise. BMX bikes are frowned upon because they often don't have brakes, and skating on the street is banned. But some spots just glow so strongly with potential to be ridden that "no trespassing" signs become invisible.

Tokyo "underground" skateboarding crew "KP" are notorious for their anti-police attitude. Their videos are satirically edited to mock the unfortunate policemen on night duty. But most riders and skaters try to be polite when told off.

"We don't want to get in trouble and waste time. When they say leave, we'll leave," says Peggy. But it's likely they would come back the next night to keep filming tricks at that spot.

It's a way of life for most people, addictive and rewarding in ways other sports can't be. It's been described as a kind of meditation, where riding or skating is just part of the body's natural movement, and the real exercise is in the mind.

See this article on our website for extra Tokyo street skating and BMX riding videos.

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PARKS AND TREPIDATION

The other side of Inokashira

BY TREVOR CAMPBELL

Inscribed by Tokyo's official travel guide as "an oasis in the city," Inokashira Park has helped make Kichijoji one of the city's trendiest neighbourhoods. Picturesque all year round—especially during *sakura* season—the park boasts plenty of attractions that make it a popular destination for a diverse mixture of locals and tourists. There's a zoo, a handful of lively restaurants and coffee shops, a mix of sports fields, an outdoor theater, a shrine, a pond, and the recently renovated Ghibli Museum. Whether you're planning a first date, a place to sip some afternoon *konbini* drinks, or just scouting for the perfect spot to take your next selfie, Inokashira Park is a pretty safe bet.

Well, safe to an extent. While after-dark might be one of the most romantic times to visit the park, it's also when things get straight-up creepy. As late-summer temperatures start their slow descent and fog begins to swirl through the park, the line between "unforgettable evening stroll" and "the 'Upside-Down' from *Stranger Things*" starts to get a little blurry.

Despite being smaller than other major parks in Tokyo, it's still easy to lose the crowd.

Walk through the park late at night, and it won't take you long to find yourself completely on your own. Alone and in the dark, the whole tone of the park changes. Quaint dirt paths that were inviting when doused in sunlight seem like significantly worse ideas after dark, even with the park's ample lamp light.

The same holds true for the architecture. One of the park's most charming features is its coffee shops, like hidden gem Blue Sky Coffee. As they are housed not in slick modern struc-

tures but old wooden houses that could be mistaken for enchanted cottages, it's hard to imagine a more peaceful place to enjoy a warm drink—during the day, that is. Flip the switch to midnight, and it's like a scene

from '70s Japanese horror film *House*. Storm shutters down and pitch black, save for a single light in an upstairs window...they look like the kind of place where the price of a latte isn't a few hundred yen, but rather your mortal soul. Still want that cup of joe?

It's not just the time of day that lends the park its darkness. Some believe that Benzaiten, the goddess to whom the Inokashira's blood-red Shinto shrine is dedicated, has placed a

curse on the space. According to an urban legend, any couple who rides in one of Inokashira Pond's rowboats—yes, even those adorable vessels shaped like swans—will inspire such jealousy from Benzaiten that they'll be doomed to break up shortly after they're back on shore.

But there's more. Even if you don't believe in ghosts, it's interesting to note that the area was also the site of an infamous unsolved dismemberment case that went on to inspire Natsuo Kirino's 2004 crime thriller *Out*.

But even at its eeriest, Inokashira Park is stunningly beautiful. Its dark side might even serve to make it more attractive. Far more than merely picturesque, it's the kind of place that has plenty of secrets to discover, and can completely transform itself depending on which story you choose to believe.

Tokyo is one of the safest cities in the world, and so there's likely no real danger in this little wooded paradise just south of Kichijoji Station. But who can really say what's hidden in the shadows?





SLEEPLESS IN SHINJUKU

After-hours trekking in Tokyo

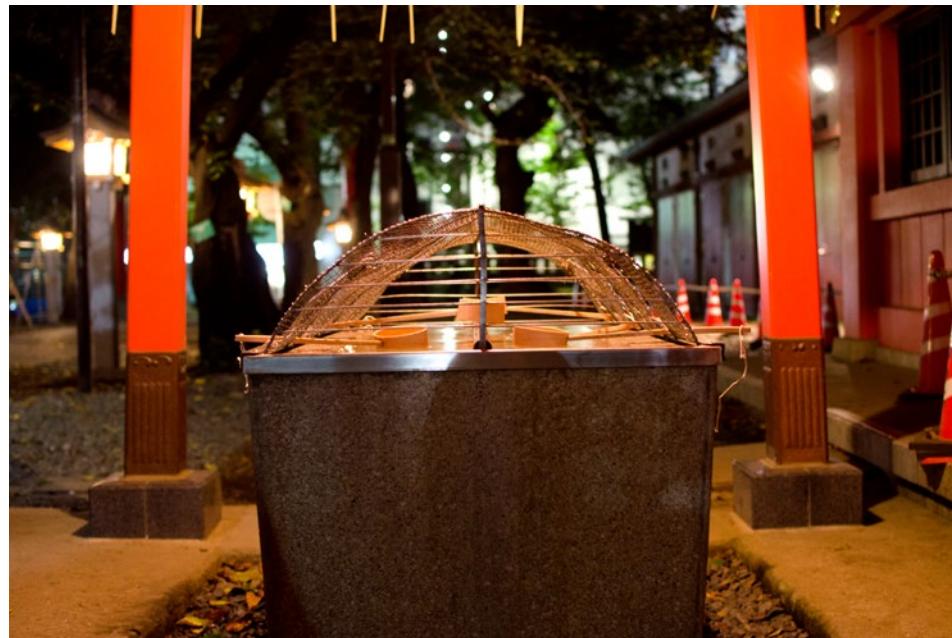
BY ANGELA QIAN

Tokyo never seems to sleep, with its frenetic clubs and midnight bars, neon lights, and salarymen tottering into capsule hotels to wait for morning. But what does the city look like in these pre-dawn hours, outside of the drunken dancing and half-empty cocktail glasses? My friends and I decided to explore the sleepy side of Tokyo, its shifts and sighs after the trains stop running and lights trickle out.

RAINBOW BRIDGE

Between Odaiba Kaihin-koen Station and Shibaura-futo Station are the two pedestrian walkways of Rainbow Bridge. The northern path looks over the lights of Tokyo Bay, while the southern boasts a view of the Odaiba skyline.

On this particular night, there were few cars and no other pedestrians. The half-hour walk around the paths was quiet, except for the occasional rattle of a passing train. Blocked off from traffic on one side and bound by cage-like fences on the other, the bridge presents a



hike that itself is undeniably industrial. But the views are stunning, particularly that of the long boats that glide around each other like fireflies in the bay. At night the skyline's reflections on the bay, which aren't that impressive in the daytime, make literal watercolors.

9:30PM: EBISU YOKOCHO

Unlike other popular alleyways like Golden Gai, this yokochō is built indoors. The open-floor plan means the eateries are all jammed right next to each other, patrons of one business mixing in with groups of another. It's hard to get seats on a weekend night, but if you can,

the riotous atmosphere—perpetuated by the guitar-slinging musicians and the occasional grimy plate—feels more like a night market from another country.

11PM: TAKASHIMAYA TIMES SQUARE

Fortune-tellers and life-advice dispensers set up their lanterns and spindly tables outside Shinjuku Station. On the east side of the station is an elegant glass-walled terrace that looks out over Takashimaya Times Square. Right by the glitzy NEWoMan mall, this fashionable open-air seating area is a pleasant





3AM: SHINJUKU COPABOWL

Nichome has more “ike-men” in two blocks than we’ve seen the whole evening ... which is how we realize we’re in Nichome. Kabukicho, by contrast, is quieter than you’d think for a weekend night. One girl who looks too young to be out dances to the tinny sound of a cheap boombox, and to a tinier audience. Shinjuku Copabowl is on the fourth floor of a 24-hour building and, at 3am, is the brightest, loudest, hopping-est place we’ve been to all night. There’s black-light bowling on the third floor, but, afraid we’d fall asleep, we opt for the lit lanes

instead. The adrenaline of competition brings us back to life.

4AM: EDINBURGH COFFEE

There’s still the odd izakaya or bar open, one man grilling up shiotan and yakitori from a tiny window. Edinburgh Coffee, by contrast, feels like a Victorian lounge in perpetual late-Sunday afternoon. Businessmen clack on laptops, students bend over books. The average drink costs ¥800 and arrives in steampunk-esque glass vessels.

The waiters all wear brown vests and slacks, and are too polite to have been up all night.

By the time we get back to the station, it’s 15 minutes to 6am. A group in fabulous attire enters the ticket gates in front of us. What their story was, I guess we’ll never know.



and quiet interlude from the crowds of the subway, and a good spot for people-watching. Over the next hour, the groups of idlers on the steps gradually dwindle as the last trains pull out from the station until the only ones left are those who, like us, are committed to staying out.

1AM: SAIZERIYA

The ice tiramisu and French onion soup taste no better at 1am than they do at any other time of day. The abrasive yellow walls hung with faux-Renaissance art have the insane asylum feel of “The Yellow Wallpaper.” A motley crew of characters—the woman in the navy cocktail dress, the man talking into his cellphone about a microwave, the four punks with hairspray enough for a musical—reminds me of Murakami’s novel After Dark, which starts in a late-night Denny’s and unfolds over one night in Tokyo. Meanwhile, as though we’re in a Beckett play, someone keeps ringing the buzzer for the waiter, endlessly. Bzzt. Bzzt bzzt. Bzzt.

2AM: HANAZONO SHRINE

On our way to Jokakuji Temple, we pass through a pleasant, tree-lined walk for the Bunka Center. One salaryman sleeps sprawled in the street, whom we wake up for fear of passing cars. The gates to the temple are shut. On our way to our next stop, we find Hanazono Shrine, the water purification basin bolted closed and the grounds abandoned. The open space is a welcome relief from the claustrophobic sidewalks. Near the shrine, three more salarymen sleep on the steps.



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Though she has wanted a housekeeper in the past, it was difficult for her to find a good option. However, Kurashinity’s professional service relieved her of all the stress of finding someone reliable. The company acts as the outsource service and does all the work for her. If you have a special request for the housekeeper, concerns about the service, or want to change schedules, simply e-mail the company and they will act on your behalf.

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The sumptuous dining culture of that time when banquets were enlivened by geishas singing, dancing and playing the shamisen while guests regaled themselves on delicious food is still going strong today and visitors to the area can still enjoy traditional hospitality.

Experience the art and elegance of Furumachi geisha by dining in one of the old inns imbued with the atmosphere of Niigata's good old days.

Event Information

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THERAPY THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Living Dreams sparks a light for Japan's ignored orphans

BY NICOLÒ GOVONI

International adoption is in decline, even as the number of orphans relentlessly goes up. Of the 150 million children orphaned worldwide, only 250,000 get adopted every year. India, China, Uganda, Haiti, and Ukraine are the countries most commonly thought of as having many of children in need, and for intercontinental policies that facilitate adoptions.

But children are subject to abuse and neglect in developed countries as well, where deplorable social issues such as child maltreatment are systematically disregarded. In Japan, orphans frequently go unacknowledged or experience stigma.

Living Dreams has been active in improving the quality of life for Japan's orphaned children.

"In Japan, orphans living in institutions are almost 40,000, scattered over 600 children's homes around the country," says Michael Clemons, director of partnerships for Living Dreams, an NPO founded in 2001. The group focuses on using technology to better conditions in children's homes. "In the past, the two World Wars were the primary causes, but now it's because of abuse ... the majority of these kids would be dead if they were still at home."

With Living Dreams, Clemons supports institutionalized children by allowing them to learn through hi-tech devices. "Thirty-five percent of orphans are on average two years behind their peers, owing to the psychological scars they carry, and only 12 to 16 percent of

them go to university. By exposing our kids to 21st-century learning and by training them to profitably use technology, we aim at improving both these numbers."

"At Living Dreams, we try to raise the awareness [within] the kids first, getting them to think of what they want to become, making them understand that university is an option for them, too," Clemons explains. He adds that the children are made to take attitudinal tests to define their interests, after which they are paired with mentors. He says providing kids with more options will help them realize they have potential and worth.

Furthermore, Living Dreams sets out to hire orphans as staff once they turn 18, so that they will have a roof over their heads in a shared house and a job as trainers at the organization. "It's an evolving, technical job that could look into a number of directions. We invest in these kids so that they can focus on the challenges of the country."

One of Living Dreams' projects is "Obaachan in the Cloud," wherein children write down questions in digital surveys that are then sent to senior citizens. It gives elders who may not feel their opinions are wanted, a chance to Skype into the children's homes to answer the questions and share their experience and advice.

"Creating such connection between the children and the elderly is beneficial for both the kids who don't have grandparents, and the

old who feel nobody cares about what they think any longer."

But it's still a long road to improving conditions of life in children's homes. According to a recent Human Rights Watch report, only a fraction of the orphans are successfully placed in foster care. The report urged Japan to reverse the trend in favor of foster families over institutions. Clemons, however, believes this isn't the right way to tackle the problem in the country.

"Kids who aren't lucky enough to find a family to keep them are rejected, and that rejection compounds on itself over and over ... and they end up not caring at all. If you are in an environment where you're safe and taken care of ... [that's] a better solution," he says.

Living Dreams works with children aged two to 18 years old. At the homes, they are divided into "family pots"—units of seven or eight kids living together, with an appointed teacher and counselor. The children function as a family unit, cooking their food, washing dishes, and doing homework in their rooms.

"Orphans here are considered 'thrown-away children,'" says Clemons, addressing a traditional phenomenon, rooted in Confucianism, that is still ongoing. "People begin with the misconception that these children have tainted blood. No matter the circumstances they grow up in, something is believed to be genetically wrong with them. If their parents are criminals, the baby will grow up to be one [too]."

The stigma around the lack of a family follows children into adulthood, sometimes preventing them from obtaining jobs, renting apartments, and even getting married. The severity of the shame creates a general preference for children to stay in abusive households than enter an orphanage. As for adoptions, Clemons asserts that it is a foreign concept in Japan, which explains the dramatically low number of adoptions here. Furthermore, given that couples already face difficulties with adoption, single parents and same-sex couples have it worse.

"Many parents do show up once or twice a year, and the child knows who the mom is, but the bond with her is gone. Despite this ... the government deters biological parents from severing family ties, as bloodline in Japan is seen as divine. These children therefore live in a limbo."

Living Dreams is seeking dedicated volunteers to help the organization provide the children with mentors on the long-term. "There is a need for mentors, from English teachers to ... professionals who can share their skills with our kids, either in person or on Skype."

While there are still hurdles for children's homes in Japan to overcome, Living Dreams shows that improvements are being made and that there is hope.

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OCTOBER NEWS

The **Bake Neko (Supernatural Cat) Festival** is once again taking over the main street of Kagurazaka for a day. This area is said to be home to the cat in Natsume Sōseki's famous Japanese novel *I am a Cat*. Participants can dress like cats, shop for cat-themed goods, and prowl about the neighborhood. It goes from 10am to 5pm with a huge cat-themed street parade 2pm–5pm. bakeneko.oops.jp

The seasons are changing around us, and we can observe the changes too, in the form of fruits and vegetables. The **Earth Day Farmers Market** is on again near Harajuku on October 22. Ten years on and it's still celebrating some of the best organic fruit, veg, and other treats to be found in town. It's held in Yoyogi Park Elms, so you can browse the freshest goods in nature itself.

Setagaya is known as one of the best areas of Tokyo for its bakeries and bread products. Find out why by exploring all things bread at the **Setagaya Bread Festival**. This unique and highly popular event features a bread university, a bread market, live music, and a stamp rally. It's held in Setagaya Park on October 9 and 10.

Lace your shoes and get the leash for Fido; it's time to walk, and for a good cause to boot. Join the **Doggy Day Trip to Koma** on October

16, to escape Tokyo for a day and fund the Animal Refuge Kansai's (ARK) efforts to house and care for animals. The ticket fee will cover travel, an organic lunch, and a goodie bag; 15 percent of the profits go to ARK. Meet at Ikebukuro Station and take the train to Koma, where you and your dog can wander around the meadows, rivers, and foothills of the Chichibu mountains. Check details here: bit.ly/2cP9b4A.

The **Tokyo Game Show** opened in Chiba on September 16, beckoning tech and gaming fans from all over the world into the halls of Makuhari Messe. This was the year of Virtual Reality, as gaming giants showed off their roster of immersive, three-dimensional consoles and games, with offerings from the likes of "Resident Evil" and "Final Fantasy." Atsushi Morita, president of Sony Interactive Entertainment Japan, publicly mused on the future of VR, stating that it could also be used to transport the gamer to heritage sites or to the beach, without leaving home.

The number of **centenarians in Japan** has hit an all-time high, according to statistics released by The Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare. The number of people aged 100 years or more reached 65,692 in September, up by 4,124 people from the previous year. Women were more likely to join the centenarians club, making up 87.6 percent of the total figure. The number of males aged 100 and over was estimated at 8,167, up by 327 since last year. This year marks the 46th consecutive year that an increase in the

number of centenarians was observed.

Thinking of studying in Australia, or encouraging the kids to go down under? You can learn more at the **Study in Australia Fair** on October 8. One in four students at Australian universities are international students, enjoying student lifestyles in new and exciting locations. Representatives from 30 Australian universities will be there to talk with you about study options and your future career. It's on 11am-6pm in Akihabara. afuee.jp/en.php



Intimate Dimensions, a special print exhibition featuring 80 contemporary Japanese prints, is on until October 16. This fundraising exhibition helps provide scholarships and funds for Fukushima Relief Projects. See works from young new printmakers as well as from a 103-year-old calligrapher. It is organised by the College Women's Association of Japan (CWAJ), a non-profit volunteer organisation of women. They have 500 members from over 30 countries who create a community together through education and cross-cultural exchange. Learn more about the show and CWAJ at cwaj.org.

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CLUB GOIN' UP

FIVE HOT CLUBS IN TOKYO

Sure, we've all heard about Tokyo's electric nightlife. But separating the wheat from the chaff is no easy task when you've got hundreds of options beckoning from each sidewalk. So here's our top-five list of where to go to get down.

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10/7-10/9 - 11th Year Anniversary Party
10/28-10/31 - Halloween Party
12/31 - Countdown Party

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🏡 B1F Shin-Daisho Bldg. 2-10-7 Dogenzaka,
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👥 1000 people

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🏡 2-16 Maruyamacho, Shibuya-ku. Tel: 03-5459-0039 🌐 Shibuya. www.womb.co.jp

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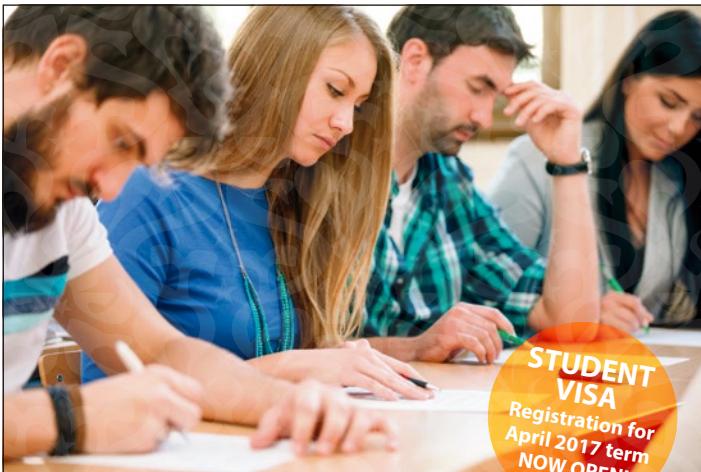
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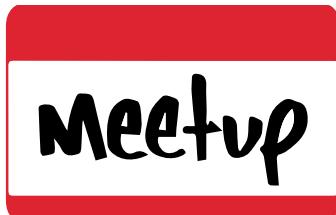


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♥ Love ♠ Money ♣ Luck

ARIES

Mar 21-Apr 20 ♥♥ ¥¥ ♣♣♣

 October creates a desire to enjoy your home life or cozy up your nest. This month's balance is in partnership, whether it's business or personal. Not everyone has a partner, so if you're single, you're doing double duty. Though you receive twice the benefits of your labor! Mars crosses Pluto mid-month, influencing your career. What you have fought for will be restored.

LEO

Jul 24-Aug 23 ♥♥♥ ¥¥¥ ♣♣♣

 October makes it easier to say goodbye to the sun dreams of last summer. A quiet stream of thoughts subtly entices future plans. A partner or spouse may suggest an event you normally wouldn't think is "you." However, you're able to shine in any season, so open the door to sparkling possibilities. Single Leos: revamp your look as you redress your tresses.

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 23-Dec 22 ♥♥♥ ¥¥¥ ♣♣♣

 October offers a chance to sit down and catch your breath. Planetary action focuses on what you want and how to achieve it. Supportive friends are a blessing; of course, you're there for them too. Even moments a day can keep a connection alive. A possible disappointment in the financial arena is quickly over and replenished. Underpinnings of mystery mean love has more to offer.

TAURUS

Apr 21-May 21 ♥♥♥♥ ¥¥¥♦♦

 Score points as you walk towards a new position in your career. Either you're regrouping to get where you want to be, or you have accepted a challenge. Balance and influence are yours through a feminine influence or mentor. Don't let those nighttime doubts dissuade you. You're about to build a dream into your home—where love lives and shines—with warmth and color!

VIRGO

Aug 24-Sep 23 ♥♥♥ ¥¥♦♦

 October includes quiet moments where you may wonder where everyone has gone. You've trusted your instincts and worked hard, so why the gap? The pull of the Moon's South Node and Neptune opposite the North Node in Virgo invites a creative void. Old dreams mix with new. What you thought could not happen now can, as you leave space for them to occur.

CAPRICORN

Dec 23-Jan 20 ♥♥♥ ¥¥¥♦♦♦

 You're free to disagree and then agree again. October brings more wiggle room, including space to breathe. Mars crosses Pluto in Capricorn mid-month. This is like watching a train wreck in slow motion that gets saved at the last moment. Your energy picks up—or you have time to recover—so your career can take off. Someone holds a torch for you. Will they match your light?

GEMINI

May 22-Jun 21 ♥♥♥ ¥¥¥♦♦♦

 Choices made have the option of morphing in October. What was considered chic and desirable can be turned on its head. Being true to your whispering spirit helps you dig in your heels to create what best reflects the real you. Your skills as an orator are about to be heard. Love takes a turn for the better, especially if you make time to talk. A secret at work is about to lose its grip.

CANCER

Jun 22-Jul 23 ♥♥ ¥¥♦♦♦

 Career focus goes awry while you're trying to beautify your home. Don't worry that you picked the wrong time—you didn't. A relationship amps up as Mars crosses Pluto mid-month. What needed to be said or dealt with allows you to breathe freely again. Ceres and Dark Moon Lilith both back you when it comes to love and romance. Just be sure to expect the unexpected.

LIBRA

Sep 24-Oct 23 ♥♥♥♥ ¥¥¥♦♦♦

 October brings "happy birthday!" wishes for Librans born during the first three weeks of the month. Jupiter in Libra expands prospects, which occurs only once every 12 years. Your communication skills are impressive. Show them off to your best advantage in phone calls, letters, scripts, or at parties. Love has to be unusual and quirky, or you're just not interested.

SCORPIO

Oct 24-Nov 22 ♥♥ ¥¥¥♦♦♦

 Happy birthday to Scorpios born in October! Dreams are lit by planets traversing your solar 12th house. By next month, you'll be acting on them. For now, they remain in the cool quiet corners of your thoughts, as you nurture them into existence. Someone who loves you has not played all their cards. Mystery and magic may tempt you.

AQUARIUS

Jan 21-Feb 19 ♥♥♥ ¥¥¥♦♦♦

 Don't expect everything to show up the way you intended. Restructuring of the spirit requires a matching image to materialize. Pallas Athene is retrograde in your sign through mid-month. She wants it her way—creative, unique—or no way at all. Then Mars crosses Pluto in your solar twelfth house. You can feel your dreams aching to arrive. Which they will. Starting next month.

PISCES

Feb 20-Mar 20 ♥♥♥ ¥¥♦♦♦

 October is your month to reflect. Choices you have made still resound through your senses. It takes time to absorb events that are life-changing, whether others realize this or not. Even minute bits of information can rearrange a perspective. You're the first in line to receive support and resources from a partnership. Friends rally after Mars crosses Pluto mid-month. You are unique.

Illustration by Christi Rochin



HAIR

The 'Dos and Don'ts

BY CJ HAYES



When I took a job teaching English at a middle school in Japan, I knew that I would have to hide certain things about myself. I have tattoos, including one just below my right wrist. It's my most cynical piece, which reflects my attitude throughout my youth in the public schools of California. Whenever I raise my right hand, even while wearing cuffs, you can plainly read the word, "Why?" written in black cursive script.

I remember being tossed out of class a few times in middle school, usually because of my asking that question. Despite this, I got mostly As, and teachers even liked me, somehow. But seeing me, you wouldn't have expected that. I didn't have any tattoos then—instead, I had my hair.

It was as different from anyone else's as it could possibly get. I had a rat tail—a relic of a bygone era when I idolized my Japanese karate

teacher—but shaved the sides short. To top it off, a mop of Manic Panic locks that nearly no adults ever approved of.

My mother always said that it was a good way to rebel: "Hair grows back."

I never really fit in, and the hair expressed that. I was a quiet introvert, but marked myself on purpose, as I didn't want anyone to think they knew me from afar or what was going on in my head. Green, blue, deep red, and sometimes a purple when the dye didn't take ... or, when washing my hair, a mixed rainbow mess. I was as complicated as the border around my face.

I came to Japan with something less shocking. I was ahead of the curve on hipster haircuts, modifying the standard Mohawk of my 20s into something that better suited the natural swoop of my hair. At my placement school, the kids, teachers, and the errant parent alike would comment on how cool my haircut was.

It was then that I started noticing their hair. The teachers all seemed to ascribe to a rather short list of possibilities. But there was something even more off about the kids, who looked like they had to choose from five different pictures clipped out of a military guidebook. I brushed it off as just another cultural difference; after all, the kids wore uniforms to school every day. This was Japan, and not my problem to fix.

I didn't worry about it until I got my first haircut here. I found a barber who spoke English and had him give me the same cut I had when I got off the plane. It was fresh, short, and felt good. I relished in shedding the shag that developed in the months since my last trim.

At least I did, until my board of education representative cornered me after a meeting.

“

I CAME TO JAPAN WITH SOMETHING LESS SHOCKING. I WAS AHEAD OF THE CURVE ON HIPSTER HAIRCUTS, MODIFYING THE STANDARD MOHAWK OF MY 20S INTO SOMETHING THAT BETTER SUITED THE NATURAL SWOOP OF MY HAIR.”

Everyone else had filed out the door, but he put his hand on my chest and pressured me back into the room. He said a few words in English, then proceeded to chew me out in Japanese. It was the hair, I gathered. He was usually so nice. Apparently, he forgot what I looked like at orientation. I seethed for days.

I felt like that middle-schooler again, raising his hand, wondering "why" he did his job and worked as hard as he could. I rode my bike to school in 35-degree weather, through typhoons when necessary. There was no commendation for good work or overtime, but a haircut somehow earned me this little tirade.

At the start of the second semester, there was a gathering in the gym from which the kids lined up to file out as they always did. Only this time, the teachers formed up on either side of the procession, stopping the students to check their hair. They made the girls lean forward to see where their bangs fell. If, when the girl stood up, her hair didn't naturally fall out of her line of sight, she was shepherded to the side. The boys got the same. "Too long around the neck, the sideburns, the fringe in the front? Get to the side." I watched as the entire second-year class was vetted, being given the "you need to do better to represent the school" speech. The children were made to sign a paper saying they'd get it fixed, and then let go.

There, but for the grace of being born in another country, went I.

I worry about them a lot, the introverts among them. The mosh pit of shaggy students naturally featured some of my favorites: kids who never wanted to be noticed in class, the ones who sat with a book while the others ran around. I wish I could tell them what it's like in other countries where a piercing or a tattoo doesn't preclude you from polite society. Where your haircut doesn't matter as much as what you do, and who you are.

For now, I'll just keep cutting my own, until someone can answer my question.

CJ Hayes is a teacher living in Japan.



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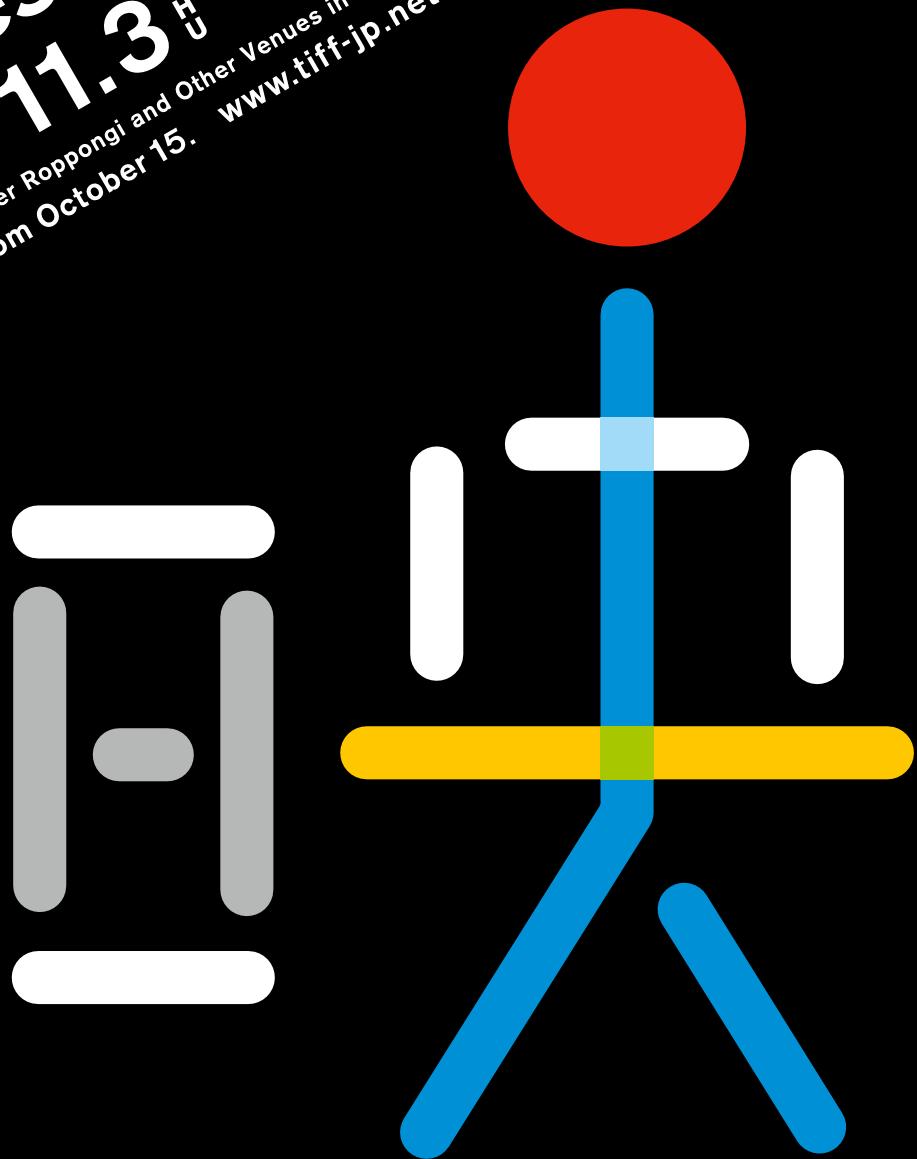
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Opening Film *Florence Foster Jenkins*



Director: Stephen Frears

Cast: Meryl Streep, Hugh Grant, Simon Helberg

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Closing Film *Satoshi: A Move for Tomorrow*



Director: Yoshitaka Mori

Cast: Kenichi Matsuyama, Masahiro Higashide, Shota Sometani

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